



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 20, 2023

CHA ADVANCES A UNITED EFFORT TO STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST HEALTHCARE WORKERS

WALLINGFORD – The **Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA)** has adopted a *Statewide Patient and Family Code of Conduct Policy* as part of the association’s continued work to reduce violence against healthcare workers.

The common set of principles will be implemented in a unified effort by hospitals and health systems across the state to further their work to protect healthcare workers and the patients in their care. The effort is a part of CHA’s broader workforce initiatives to support Connecticut’s healthcare professionals and grow the workforce.

“Connecticut’s compassionate and dedicated healthcare workers deserve our respect and gratitude,” said **Jennifer Jackson, CEO, CHA**. “The violence that has been experienced by healthcare workers nationwide is unacceptable. Connecticut hospitals have worked for years to support safe workplaces for caregivers and patients alike. Adopting a statewide policy makes it even clearer that Connecticut hospitals are united against violence, and will not let up on their efforts to ensure the safety of every person in hospitals across the state.”

“A unified, statewide policy will support hospitals’ collaborative and ongoing work to raise awareness about the importance of workplace safety in healthcare settings,” said **Kathleen Silard, President & CEO, Stamford Health and Co-Chair, CHA Workforce Sustainability Task Force**. “This policy clearly defines actions that will not be tolerated, including aggressive or violent behavior, discriminatory language, actions that may be perceived as sexual harassment, and the possession of weapons of any kind in hospital or health system facilities. By unifying around a statewide policy, we can ensure we’re creating a safe environment for our staff, visitors and patients to receive the expert, compassionate care they deserve.”

“It is critical that we share this unified message with the public so that all patients, visitors, and workers know what is being done to build on safety and prevent violence,” said **Kurt Barwis, CEO, Bristol Health and Co-Chair, CHA Workforce Sustainability Task Force**. “We are going to continue our work with the legislature, building off of legislation approved this year that aims to raise awareness about preventing violence against healthcare workers and increase opportunities for the state to support hospital investments in security infrastructure.”

Nationwide, healthcare workers are uniquely and disproportionately at risk of workplace violence. The most recent data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics indicates healthcare workers accounted for 73% of all nonfatal workplace injuries and illness due to violence in 2018 (*April 2020 Bureau of Labor Statistics Fact Sheet*). In 2022, there were 1,948 reported incidents in Connecticut of violence in hospitals and hospital staff were the victim in 100% of the incidents reported.

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Connecticut hospitals have implemented policies to address workplace violence through multiple different approaches. They have established workplace safety committees including management and staff to conduct risk assessments, develop a plan, and meet regularly to implement and modify the plan as required. Connecticut hospitals and health systems are identifying patients at risk for intentional harm to themselves or others and taking steps to mitigate this risk, and they are recognizing environmental safety risks for patients and staff and making changes to reduce the occurrence of incidents. They are also providing ongoing education and training to staff and volunteers on crisis prevention and de-escalation techniques and approaches to ensuring personal safety.

Earlier this year, the Connecticut General Assembly adopted Special Act No. 23-29 which aims to raise awareness about preventing violence against healthcare workers and opportunities for the state to support hospital investments in security infrastructure. Congress is also considering ways to better protect healthcare workers nationwide through federal policies.

To read the *Statewide Patient and Family Code of Conduct Policy* click [here](#).

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